

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A device for producing panels of mosaic tesserae having at least a supporting and/or lining sheet on a visible face of said tesserae arranged inside an advancing frame, said device comprising:

feeding means having a reel member configured to store and continuously dispense said supporting and/or lining sheet; and

application means for applying said sheet over said mosaic tesserae, said application means including cutting means configured to cut said sheet into ~~a segment~~ segments of variable sizes corresponding to the size of the advancing frame containing the mosaic tesserae, and suction drum rotating means to retain at least temporarily, on an outer cylindrical surface thereof, said ~~segment of sheet~~ segments, and to release said ~~segment~~ segments onto said mosaic tesserae, said suction drum rotating means retaining each of said ~~segment of sheet~~ segments by a suction force and releasing said each of said sheet segments ~~segment of sheet~~ onto the mosaic tesserae by temporarily ceasing the suction force,

wherein said suction drum rotating means includes:

a hollow drum equipped inside with means to create a depression;

a plurality of holes disposed circumferentially and axially to substantially cover the whole drum surface to produce the suction force to accommodate said segments of said variable sizes; ~~the segment of variable sizes~~; and

clamping means to block the suction force at least for a section of the drum surface facing the conveyor belt, and for an amplitude to substantially cover the tesserae said suction drum rotating means is configured to be lowered and lifted, such that after one of said segments of said sheet has been released, said suction drum is raised to allow the advancing frame to pass, and said suction drum is lowered back when a next incoming frame is in a suitable position to receive another one of said segments of said sheet, said suitable position corresponding to a location a few millimeters from the perimeter of said advancing frame where an end of said sheet is placed.

2. (Previously Presented) The device as in claim 1, wherein said cutting means are able to act on said sheet when it is held on the outer surface of said suction drum means.

3. (Currently Amended) The device as in claim 1, wherein said sheet has a face ~~equipped with gluing means~~ disposed thereon, said sheet being configured ~~and is able to wind on said suction drum means with an opposite~~ its face without gluing means ~~and for at an angle such as to invert~~ for inverting the direction of feed and presenting ~~present its~~ said face equipped with gluing means facing towards said advancing frame.

4. (Previously Presented) The device as in claim 1, further comprising at least a pressure roller arranged downstream of said suction drum means, said pressure roller being able to press the segment of said sheet against the surface of said tesserae to achieve stable attachment thereof.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently Amended) The device as in claim 1, wherein said suction drum means includes means ~~able~~ configured to interrupt the suction at least ~~in the step~~ when

the segment of said sheet is released in correspondence with a relative frame containing said tesserae.

7. (Currently Amended) The device as in claim 6, wherein said means ~~able~~ configured to interrupt the suction comprise mechanical means arranged inside said hollow drum for a zone correlated substantially to the size of said frame.

8. (Currently Amended) The device as in claim 3, further comprising means to deliver steam or nebulized water arranged in cooperation with the visible face of said mosaic tesserae, said means to deliver being configured ~~and able to deliver a jet~~ against said face to reactivate the ~~glue~~ gluing means on said sheet.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Previously Presented) The device as in claim 1, wherein said supporting and/or lining sheet is applied on the visible face of said tesserae.

11. (Currently Amended) The device as in claim 3, wherein in the event that said sheet to be applied comprises at least ~~two layers~~ first and second layers, ~~of which~~ a said first layer is ~~able~~ configured to be arranged on said mosaic tesserae and at least a said second layer is ~~able~~ configured to hold the ~~glue~~ gluing means and to be removed when said first layer comes into contact with said suction drum, a winding roller is arranged substantially parallel to said suction drum to rewind said second layer after it said second layer has been detached from said first layer.

12. (Currently Amended) The device as in claim 1, further comprising means ~~able~~ configured to heat the visible face of said tesserae arranged upstream of said application ~~means to apply said sheet~~.

13. (Currently Amended) The device as in claim 12, wherein said means ~~able~~ configured to heat the visible face of said tesserae comprise at least a bar delivering a flow of hot air.

14. (Currently Amended) The device as in claim 12, wherein said means ~~able~~ configured to heat the visible face of said tesserae comprise at least a radiating heating device.

15. (Withdrawn - Currently Amended) A method of producing panels of mosaic tesserae and in particular to apply at least a supporting and/or lining sheet on a visible face of the mosaic tesserae arranged inside an advancing frame, the method comprising using feeding means and application means for applying said sheet cooperating with the feeding means of said frame, cutting to size a segment of the sheet, retaining at least temporarily, on an outer cylindrical surface of suction drum rotating means, said segment of sheet, and releasing said segment of sheet onto said frame containing said mosaic tesserae in a position corresponding to where an end of said sheet segment is placed a few millimeters from the perimeter of said advancing frame.

16. (Withdrawn) The method as in claim 15, wherein said sheet has a face equipped with gluing means, wherein said sheet winds on said suction drum means with its face without gluing means and for an angle such as to invert the direction of feed and to present its face equipped with gluing means facing towards said frame.

17. (Withdrawn) The method as in claim 15, further comprising pressing the segment of sheet against the surface of said tesserae to achieve the stable attachment thereof.

18. (Withdrawn) The method as in claim 15, further including interrupting the suction at least in the step when the segment of sheet is released in correspondence with a relative frame containing said tesserae.

19. (Withdrawn) The method as in claim 15, further including delivering steam or nebulized water, arranged in cooperation with the visible face of said mosaic tesserae, and delivering a jet against said visible face to re-activate the glue arranged on said sheet.

20. (Withdrawn) The method as in claim 15, further comprising moving said suction drum means alternately up and down to allow the free transit of the frame after the segment of sheet has been released.

21. (Withdrawn) The method as in claim 15, further comprising applying said supporting and/or lining sheet onto the visible face of said tesserae.

22. (Withdrawn) The method as in claim 15, further comprising delivering a heating flow onto the visible surface of said tesserae before the sheet is applied thereon.

23. (Withdrawn) The method as in claim 22, wherein said heating flow has a temperature of between about 20 and about 40 °C.

24. (Currently Amended) A device as in claims 1-4, 6-8, and 10-14,
wherein the segments of said sheet are suitably positioned by said device to
maintain a gap between adjacent tiles, comprising:

~~at least one panel having a plurality of mosaic tesserae and a transparent~~
~~supporting sheet on a visible face of said mosaic tesserae, the mosaic tesserae being~~
~~arranged in a geometric configuration;~~

~~feeding means having a reel member configured to store and continuously
dispense said supporting and/or lining sheet; and~~

~~application means for applying said sheet over said mosaic tesserae, said
application means including cutting means configured to cut said sheet into a segment
of variable sizes corresponding to the mosaic tesserae and suction drum rotating means
to retain at least temporarily, on an outer cylindrical surface thereof, said segment of
sheet and to release said segment onto said mosaic tesserae, said suction drum
rotating means retaining said segment of sheet by a suction force and releasing said
segment of sheet onto the mosaic tesserae by temporarily ceasing the suction force,~~

~~wherein said suction drum rotating means includes:~~

~~a hollow drum equipped inside with means to create a depression;~~

~~a plurality of holes disposed circumferentially and axially to substantially cover
the drum surface to produce the suction force to accommodate the segment of variable
sizes; and~~

~~clamping means to block the suction force at least for a section of the drum
surface facing the conveyor belt, and for an amplitude to substantially cover the
tesserae.~~

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 15, wherein the panels of glass mosaic
include a plurality of mosaic tesserae arranged in a desired geometric configuration,
and wherein the panels include a transparent supporting sheet arranged on the visible
face of said mosaic tesserae.

27. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 26, wherein said supporting sheet has at least a face equipped with gluing means before it is applied onto said mosaic tesserae.